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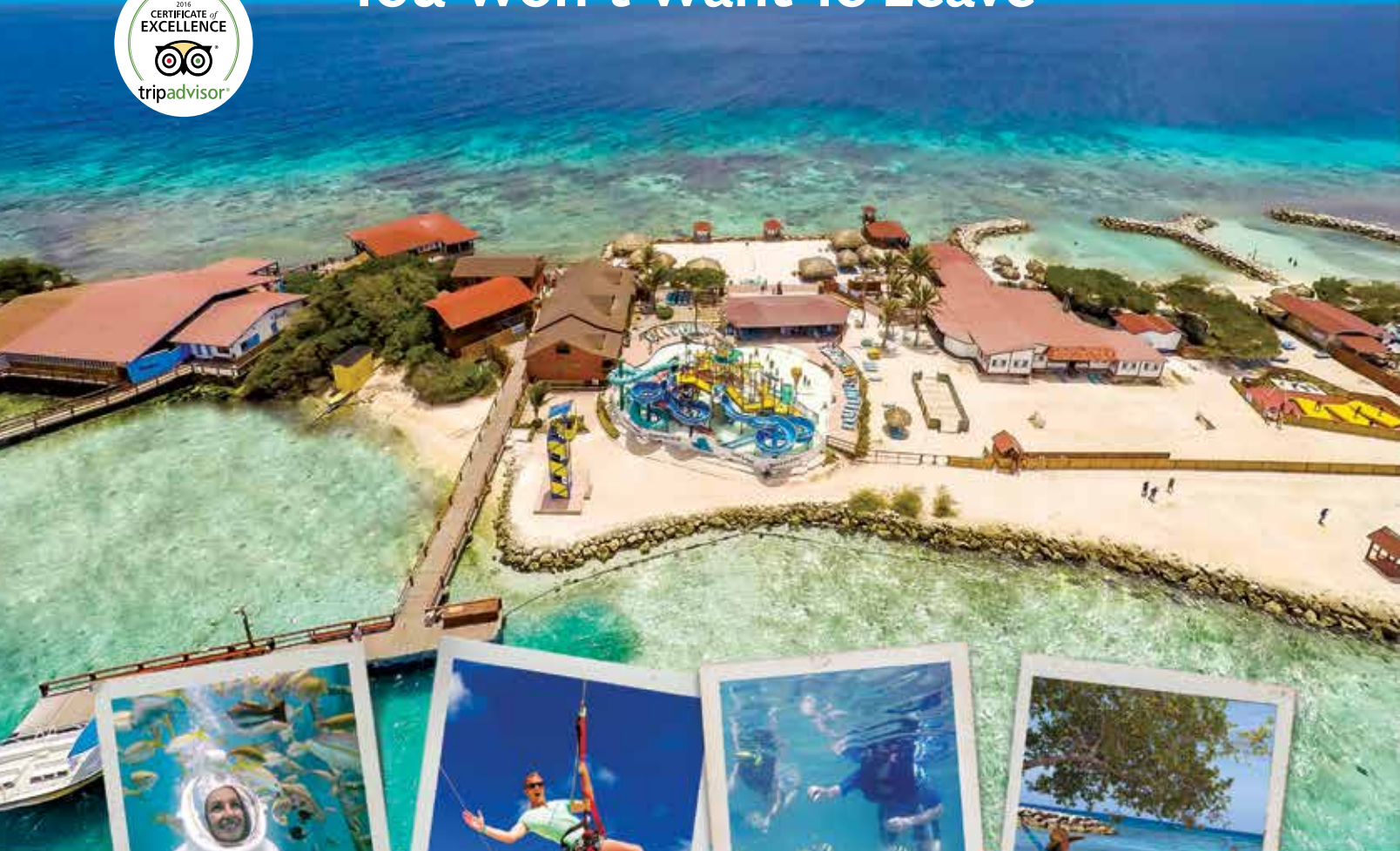
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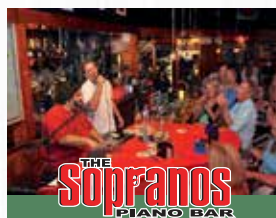
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Shot on location at Tierra del Sol Resort & Golf by Steve Keith. Clothing and accessories from Coconuts
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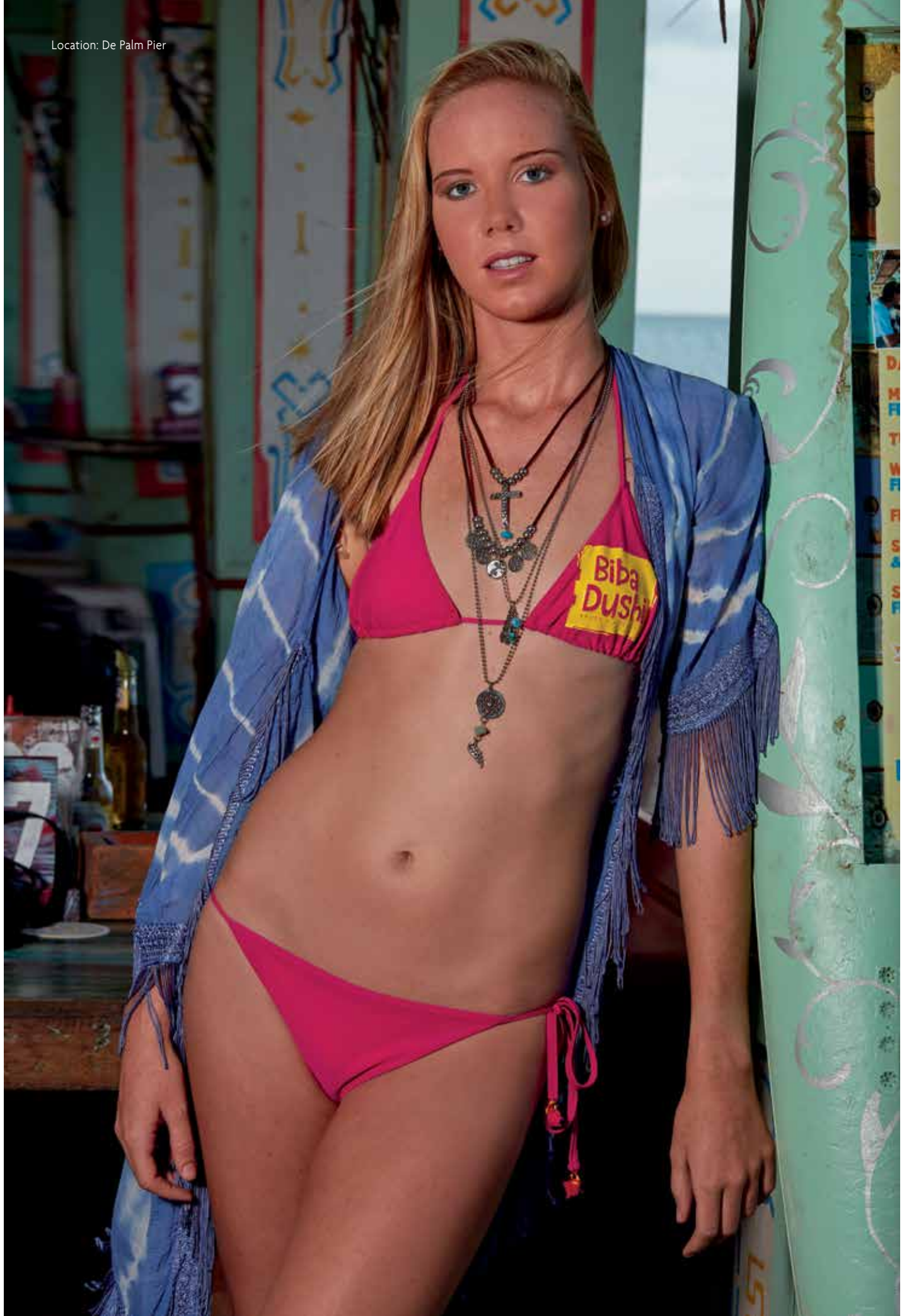
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Getting Your Five a Day... IN ARUBA

Photography by Steve Keith
Text by Debbie Kunder

Aruba...we all know it as that tiny Caribbean island, where the sun is always shining and refreshing breezes are always blowing. We know it as the perfect destination for gorgeous blond beaches that hug crystalline turquoise waters; a mecca of great restaurants, shopping, and watersports; and home to friendly, accommodating locals. We also tend to think of Aruba as a barren desert island where nothing grows except for cacti, aloes, and acacias. Locally grown fruits and vegetables? Unthinkable! This conception is perpetuated by sources like Wikipedia, which puts forth that “Unlike much of the Caribbean region, Aruba has a dry climate and an arid, cactus-strewn landscape.” But let’s just cut to the chase here—this conception is a misconception.

In the 13 years that I have lived in Aruba, I’ve enjoyed coconuts and local cherries from my own backyard, as well as plenty of mangoes that have fortuitously fallen into my yard from my neighbor’s tree. (These are not your insipid, supermarket-variety mangoes—although somewhat fibrous,

they are aromatic and flavorful.) I have also enjoyed snapping off a tamarind pod here and there from the tamarind tree growing wild in the park close to my house, delighting in its sweet-and-sour pulp. I’ve been given gifts of bunches of quenepa fruit, whose thin, tight skins are so satisfying to pierce. And my little papillon serves as the “Johnny Almondseed” of the neighborhood, picking up an almond fruit that has fallen from our almond tree at the beginning of each walk, and then absentmindedly leaving it at a neighbor’s gate in order to yap at another dog three times his size.

But I’m just a mere immigrant...what do I really know? To get the real scoop, I started with a visit to Santa Rosa, home of Aruba’s Department of Agriculture, Husbandry, and Fisheries. There, horticulturalist Tilo Damian took a trip down memory lane as he described to me the various edibles he would pilfer as a youngster from people’s yards on his walk home from school, including quenepa, guava, pomegranate, soursop, and purple mombin. He then helped



me track down THE expert on the different fruits growing naturally in Aruba—96-year-old Isaac Chin. Born in Guyana and raised in Trinidad, Isaac grew up among fruit trees; in fact, fruits were part of his survival. When he moved to Aruba in his later years, he surrounded himself with a wide variety of fruit trees on his little plot of land in Balashi, enabling him to relive his cherished boyhood. (Although Isaac no longer has as many fruit trees as he once had, his land still produces mangoes, rose apples, medlars, guavas, jujubes, purple mombins, sweet tamarind fruits, quenepas, and sugar apples.)

In time, Isaac became an expert on local fruits, writing Aruba's first real catalog of fruits on the island, *Galaxy of Fruits Aruba Grows*. That misconception that Aruba

is a sterile hunk of land? Isaac emphatically blows it out of the water, documenting about 50 different fruits that grow here. Isaac also wrote the book to "reawaken consciousness of a charming feature of Aruba which is fast disappearing"—namely, the picking, eating, and enjoyment of these "backyard" fruits. In the spirit of Isaac's mission, I profiled a handful of Aruba's fruits (and one veggie), and to keep things interesting, I chose fruits that are less familiar to us North Americans. Some of them even tout some rather impressive health benefits. (Perhaps we should start a list of Aruba's "superfoods!") One thing's for sure—if you get the chance to try them while vacationing on this not-so-barren island, please do! Isaac would certainly approve.



Quenepa or Spanish Lime (*Kenepa*)

The first time I tried a quenepa (kenepa) in Aruba, I was reminded of the lychees that I ate by the bag in Thailand. In fact, the fruit is often described as a cross between a lychee and a lime. The traditional way to eat a quenepa is to bite into the brittle skin to separate the fruit from its covering; then pop the fruit in your mouth and work the sweet, juicy, jelly-like pulp off the seed. This process of eating the quenepa is almost as enjoyable as the fruit itself. Unfortunately, picking bunches of quenepa from the tree isn't so easy, since the tree can reach as high as 30 meters. A ladder may be in order! As for health benefits, quenepa contains vitamins A and C, calcium, phosphorus, tryptophan, and lysine.



Aruba Cherry (*Shimarucu*)

The Aruba cherry, also called the Barbados cherry and the West Indian cherry, is known locally as the shimarucu. It is very different from the cherries you buy at the grocery store. Some people find the shimarucu to be too sour, but I love the juicy, soft, sweetish-tart flesh. After I found out that one single shimarucu packs the minimum daily requirement of Vitamin C, I started popping these little vitamin bombs like candy, grabbing a handful each time I passed the bush that grows rather happily in my yard. The shimarucu does have a pithy center, but you can just spit it out.



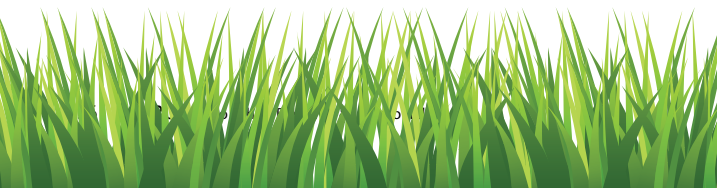
Noni

According to Isaac, noni trees can be found in the backyards of many locals. Indeed, our editor in chief has a noni on her property. When I asked her what it tastes like, she simply replied, “Yuck.” Ok, so why would anyone eat this yucky fruit? Well, it turns out noni is touted as an amazing cure-all for a limitless number of ailments. I’m personally a bit dubious about such sweeping health claims, but I’m sure we could all benefit from the whopping doses of potassium, iron, calcium, and antioxidants (including vitamin C) that noni delivers. Most commonly, noni is turned into juice, either raw or fermented. This juice can be perfectly disguised in a glass of some other (more palatable) juice!



Moringa (*Merengue*)

Have you heard of moringa yet? If not, you will soon—it’s the newest “superfood” (move aside, kale). Back home, you might have seen it sold in stores as a supplement or powder (so it can be mixed into smoothies, for example), but here in Aruba, moringa (merengue) grows wild—all over the place! The leaves are the most nutritious part of the plant, containing 9 essential amino acids, 27 vitamins, 46 antioxidants, and many minerals. Gram for gram, it has two times the protein in yogurt, four times the vitamin A of carrots, three times the potassium of bananas, four times the calcium of milk, and seven times the vitamin C of oranges. My best friend in Aruba has a moringa tree at her school, and she and her students eat the moringa leaves straight from the tree. “They taste like peanuts,” she informs. You can also put the leaves in a salad or cook them as you would spinach. In some countries, the pods are eaten, usually stewed or curried.



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Sea Grape (*Druifi di Laman*)

Wind-resistant and highly tolerant of salt, the sea grape (druifi di laman) plant is ideally suited for Aruba. The grapes grow in beautiful bunches, turning deep purple when ripe. Tasty and sweet (with a little sour), they can be eaten directly from the plant, but I hope you're not too hungry, because the pit takes up most of the fruit's volume. The fruits can also be made into jellies and jams or fermented into sea grape wine. In Aruba, local vintner Vincente Kock makes wine from his own sea grapes, bottling it under the label VINO VINCE.

Purple Mombin (*Makapruim*)

In Aruba, the purple mombin is known as the makapruim. The yellow flesh of the fruit is crunchy, somewhat dry, and semisweet. The ripe fruits are commonly eaten out-of-hand, with or without the skin. They can also be stewed whole with sugar and consumed as a dessert or made into preserves. Note that the variety sold in supermarkets in Aruba hails from Venezuela.





Mispel

My first mispel came from the tree in my friend's yard. She had been using them in her morning smoothies. I decided to do the same, but not before trying some straight. Cutting into the sandpapery skin revealed a soft and juicy light-brown flesh. I quite enjoyed the grainy texture, which mimics that of a ripe pear. The flavor is also pear-like, perhaps a bit more malty. As for the level of sweetness? Off the charts! Yes, it was even a bit too sweet for my (very) sweet tooth, but it turned out to be the perfect natural sweetener for my smoothie (and a natural laxative!).

Interestingly, the sap from the mispel tree's bark is used in making chewing gum. When an unripe fruit is picked, this white sap is released from the stem. A fully ripened fruit has saggy skin and does not release this sap when picked.

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Cashew (*Casho*)

The first time I saw a cashew (casho) “fruit” in Aruba, my mind was blown. That’s where a cashew nut comes from?!?! The pear-shaped upper part, which is attached to the stalk, is known as the cashew apple. High in vitamin C, it’s refreshing and juicy, although a bit astringent, leaving a furry feeling in your mouth. It’s often squeezed to make a juice. Interestingly, the cashew apple is not the actual fruit of the cashew tree. The true fruit of the tree is the boxing-glove-shaped drupe that grows at the end of the cashew apple. Inside of the drupe is the cashew seed—what we commonly call the cashew nut. Even more interesting is that the seed is surrounded by a double shell containing anacardic acid. This means that if you try shelling a raw cashew, you’re going to get a nasty burn. Roasting is the preferred method to destroy the toxin before the nut is shelled.

Soursop (*Sorsaka*)

I first became acquainted with this fruit when I was learning Papiamentu (Aruba’s native language) from a little textbook. According to the book, sorsaka was the local name for soursop. I remember thinking, what the heck is soursop? Soursop is a fruit that looks like a green, prickly mango and has white, juicy, soft, tart flesh. I rather like the taste description provided by Wikipedia: “The flavor has been described as a combination of strawberry and pineapple, with sour citrus flavor notes contrasting with an underlying creamy flavor reminiscent of coconut or banana.” It is reported that soursop is a natural cancer killer, 10,000 times stronger than chemotherapy, although this claim has not been proven. Isaac recommends making it into a smoothie or juice with milk and sugar rather than eating it raw. ■

I'd like to thank Isaac Chin for allowing me to use his beautiful book in the writing of this article. I hope that I have done justice to his mission of encouraging people to try and enjoy Aruba's "backyard" fruits.

This image provided by Santa Rosa

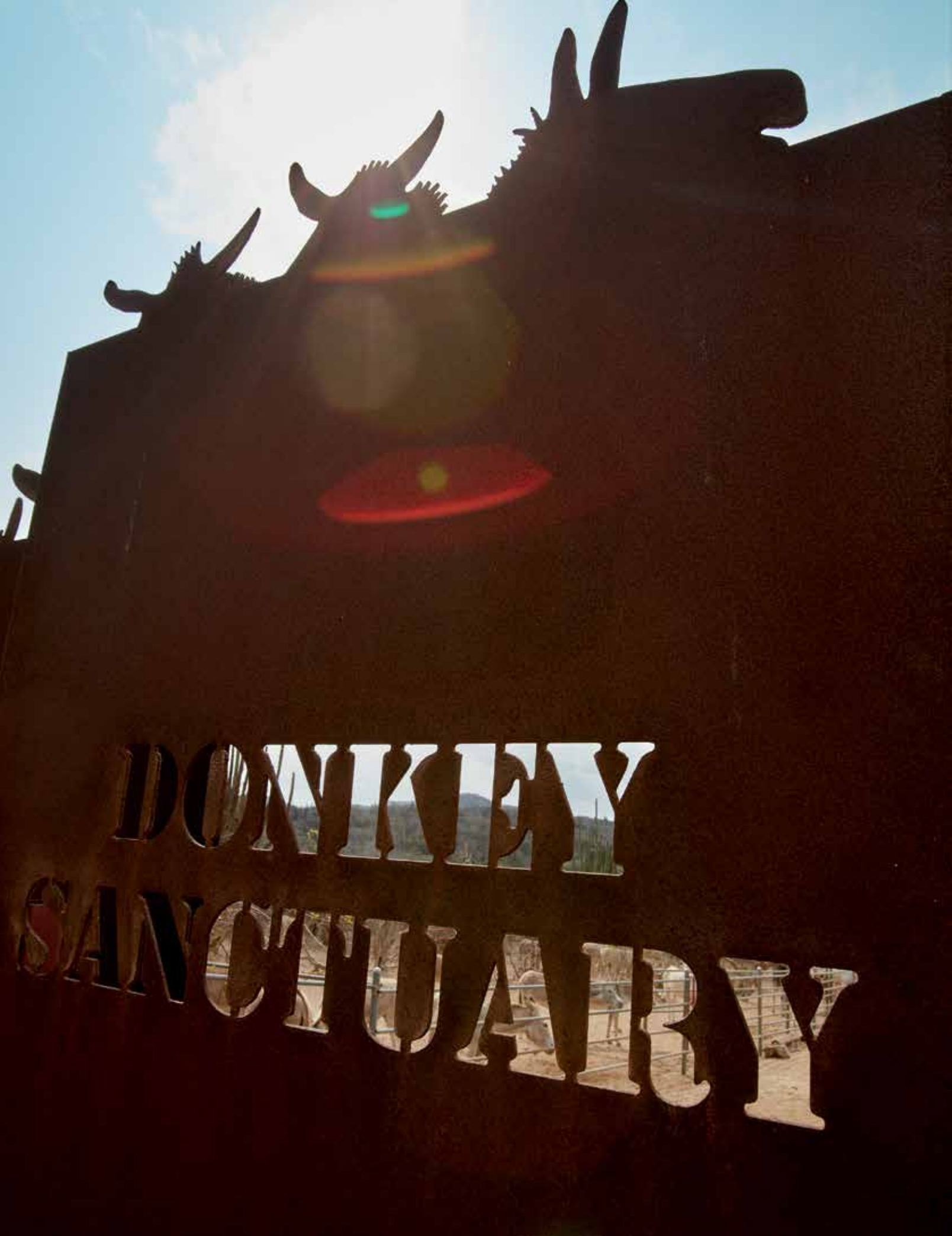


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DONKEY

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NEW DIGS FOR THE DONKEYS

Photography by Steve Keith
Text by Thalia Guest

Donkeys have been a part of Aruba's culture for the past 500 years. Before Aruba was introduced to cars, donkeys were the islanders' leading form of transportation. Once cars became commonplace, however, donkeys were no longer perceived as a necessity, and were essentially left to wander.

Malnourishment, disease, disappearing natural habitat, and systematic attrition reduced the donkey population from an estimated 1,400 at the turn of the 20th century to only 20 in the early 1970s. With the local donkey population nearly decimated, a non-profit organization was founded in 1997 as the Donkey Sanctuary with the sole purpose of saving and caring for the donkeys on the island. It is now estimated that there may be close to 200 donkeys on the island, with just over 130 at the sanctuary.

After 19 years of being located in the Santa Lucia area, in April 2016, the Donkey Sanctuary relocated to a new, spacious location in Bringamosa. Surrounded by Aruba's natural landscape, the new location in Bringamosa provides plenty of space for the sanctuary's donkeys to roam freely. Desiree Eldering, the Donkey Sanctuary's managing director, who actually housed and cared for donkeys in her backyard due to the previous location's lack of space, has worked diligently on making this new location a true home for the



donkeys as well as an attractive venue for visitors and volunteers alike. In the words of Ms. Eldering, the goals of the Donkey Sanctuary are to “rescue, protect, prevent, and preserve.” The Donkey Sanctuary strives to provide the donkeys with a peaceful habitat where they are loved and cared for.

The Donkey Sanctuary is open daily, from 9 am - 4 pm, and is completely dependent on help from volunteers. Admission is free, and all are welcome and encouraged to stop by for a visit or even lend a helping hand by feeding and cleaning. Spending the day at the Donkey Sanctuary is also the perfect family activity, as tours are available, and everyone can have the opportunity to feed, play with, and pet the friendly, multicolored donkeys. Enjoy a refreshing beverage while overlooking the donkeys and the rugged cacti-filled landscape at the temporary Visitor's Center. A permanent Visitor's Center will be constructed soon thanks to companies like De Palm Tours, which brings tourists to the sanctuary and gives a monthly donation to assist with the financial upkeep of the facility. ■



**For donation information, visit the website at <http://main.arubandonkey.org/portal/>*

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PROTECTING OUR ENDANGERED SEA TURTLES



All sea turtles are endangered worldwide, and Aruba's shores have become a favorite nesting place for the Leatherback, Hawksbill, Green, and Loggerhead species. Fundashon Turtugaruba, established in 2003 and a member of the Wider Caribbean Sea Turtle Conservation Network, is the local foundation that protects the four endangered species of sea turtles nesting on Aruba. These turtles invariably return to their natal beach to lay their eggs, and Turtugaruba volunteers know exactly where to patrol in order to spot, monitor, and protect turtle nests on the island, primarily at Eagle Beach, Boca Grandi, and Arikok National Park, with occasional nests on Palm Beach and Malmok Beach.

Sea turtles begin their nesting season on Aruba in April, and hatching can continue all the way into December. Volunteers comb the beach during the season looking for nesting turtles so the area can be cordoned off and protected. These marked nests are then monitored, especially in the days nearing hatching, to record the number



Images provided by Turtugaruba

of babies and to safeguard their journey from the beach to the sea. For information on how to assist the organization, email inquiries to info@turtugaruba.org. Check out the foundation's Facebook page (Turtugaruba Foundation) for updates on current nesting and hatching activities and the continued efforts of the foundation. Here are a few tips from the Sea Turtle Conservancy to help our sea turtles:

- Limit nighttime beach activity during nesting season.
- Keep beach clean of trash, especially balloons, ribbons, and plastic bags.
- Keep beach furniture and toys out of nesting areas.
- Do not disturb sea turtle tracks, eggs, adults, hatchlings, or nest markers.
- Report all incidents of disturbance that you may witness to the appropriate authorities.
- Never use flash photography or flashlights at a nest site. Even lights from cell phones can disturb the hatchlings if they are near the top of the nest.
- Heed instructions from patrol volunteers if you are fortunate enough to witness a nest emergence. ■

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An underwater photograph of a shipwreck in a clear blue sea. The wreck is covered in coral and marine life. Several striped fish are visible swimming around the structure. The title 'THE Wrecks of' is overlaid on the image in white text, with 'THE' and 'of' on blue rectangular backgrounds.

THE

Wrecks

of

Jane C

Photography by Steve Keith
Text By Susan Hieter
PADI MSDT, JADS Dive Center
www.jadsaruba.com

Aruba

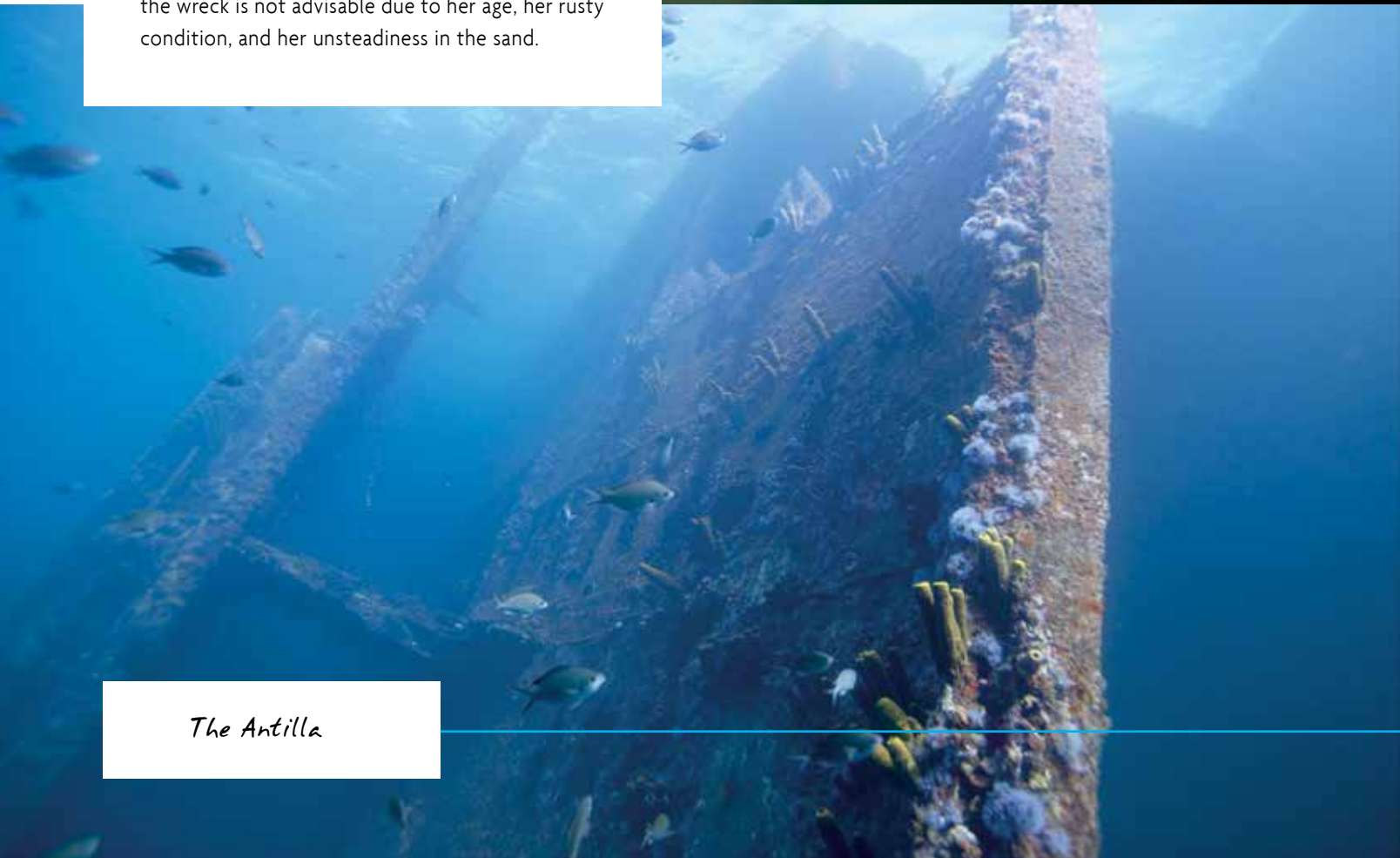
A Dive Instructor's Perspective

It's rather common knowledge where the best diving in the Caribbean can be found: places like Bonaire, Grand Cayman, Puerto Rico, and Saba probably come to mind. But here's something you may not have known: Over the past several years, Aruba has become one of the top destinations in the Caribbean for wreck diving, offering over half a dozen wrecks promising colorful marine life, each with an interesting history. The following is a list of some of the most popular wrecks of Aruba. I invite you to read on to become acquainted with these great gems that I myself have had the pleasure of getting to know quite intimately as a certified dive instructor.

The *Jane C* (aka *Jane Sea*) is my favorite wreck in Aruba. She's a beautiful wreck, fully upright with her bow facing the Island, her depths ranging from 50 to 90 feet. Many fish and other creatures migrate to her, drawn by her abundant coral and sponge growth. Although sitting in the sand, the wreck is surrounded by coral reefs, so that when you approach her, she seems to appear out of

nowhere. To the delight of divers, the Jane Sea is penetrable given that her cargo hull is fully open to the surface. The ship was sunk in 1988, with two stories explaining the reason behind her demise. One story claims she was carrying cement and another “white powder” and was therefore confiscated, while the other claims she was abandoned by the crew, her harbor dues left unpaid. When you have finished touring the wreck, you can go up to the bow and have some fun reenacting the famous scene from the movie *Titanic*.

Aruba's famous World War II wreck, the *Antilla*, is nestled in a sandy bottom at a depth of about 55 feet, where she enjoys passing schools of fish as well as her own permanent residents. Her bow and stern are pretty much intact, boasting lots of coral and sponge growth. The *Antilla's* own crew scuttled the ship in 1940, setting fires on board and opening the valves to allow seawater to enter. The middle of the boat looks like a yard sale with twisted metal everywhere, and plenty of critters can be spotted hiding among this tangled mess. While the *Antilla* offers a wonderful diving experience, penetrating the wreck is not advisable due to her age, her rusty condition, and her unsteadiness in the sand.



The Antilla



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The Renaissance Airplanes site is located south of Renaissance Island in a sandy bottom surrounded by coral reefs. There are two planes: a YS-11 and a Convair 240 (or DC-3). The Convair is in pieces, broken apart in 1999, and you can penetrate part of the fuselage since you can see the exit very clearly. The YS-11 was sunk in 2004 and is fully intact, facing the airport. It looks like the pilot misjudged the runway and landed right off of the island, but we know that this was not the case. Both planes were sunk intentionally to create dive sites and now host a menagerie of marine life ripe for exploration at depths ranging from 50 to 80 feet.

The *Debbie II*, a 120-foot fuel barge, was sunk in 1992 to a depth of 70 feet off the coast of Malmok to serve as an underwater attraction. She's a small wreck, but divers can get the rest of their fill by exploring Blue Reef nearby. Around the *Debbie II*, expect to find schooling fish, lobsters, and barrel sponges, and if you're lucky, you'll run into a ray or sea turtle.

The *Star Gerren* lies upside down in about 45 to 70 feet of water. Like the *Antilla*, she's a German ship, yet much smaller, younger, and less popular, making her the Cinderella of Aruban shipwrecks. Before she was sunk in 2000, holes were cut into the ship to



Renaissance Airplanes



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* Also serving our regular à la carte menu



TUESDAY Caribbean BBQ Buffet or Mexican Night

Alternate between a "All you can eat" BBQ buffet with live music or a typical Mexican buffet with live Mariachi band.



THURSDAY Asian Night

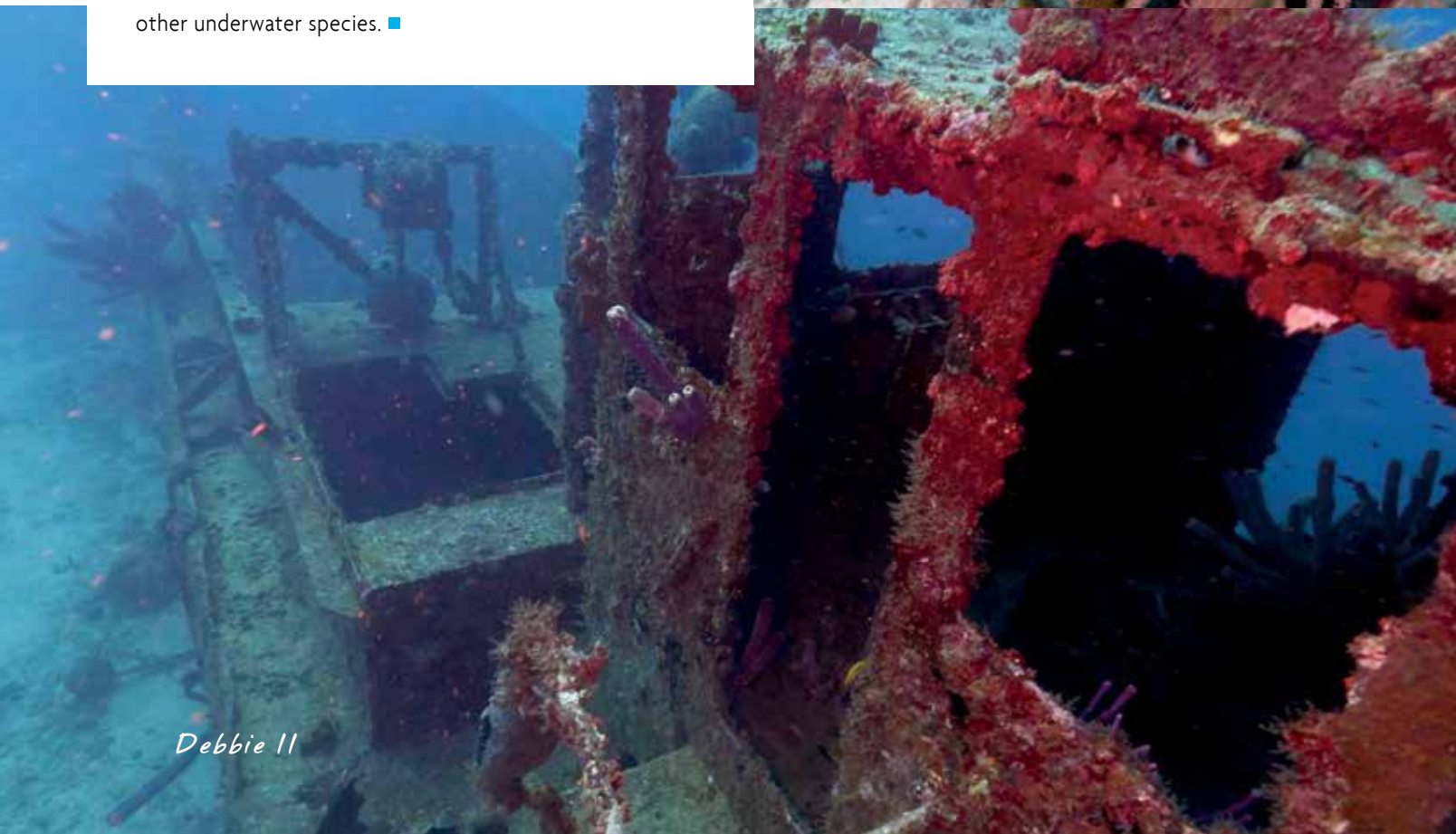
A taste of Asia. More flavors, more variety, with our 3-course Asian Delight dinner menu.

* Also serving our regular à la carte menu

allow divers to safely access the interior. You will see passing schools of fish and invertebrates within the *Star Gerren*.

The *Pedernales* was a tanker that was torpedoed by German U-boats in 1942. The midsection was damaged so much that it was cut away, and the rest of the ship was later repaired and given the name *Phoenix of Aruba*, since it “arose from the ashes.” That damaged midsection was used for years as a target for Dutch gunners before it was sunk to a depth of 25 feet to create the *Pedernales* Wreck. You will find abundant life among the pieces of metal—schools of fish, invertebrates, and much more all call this wreck their home. Located right off the cruise-ship port in about 80 feet of water is the *Harbor Tugboat* Wreck. Although small, she is surrounded by a nice reef, guaranteeing the best of both worlds. The tugboat is home to a variety of creatures, including a pair of green moray eels, while spotted eagle rays and sting rays can occasionally be seen nearby.

The *Kappel* was sunk in 2009 in the bowl of Mangel Halto by JADS Dive Center, becoming Aruba’s newest wreck. Situated in a sandy bottom at a depth of about 45 feet, the *Kappel* serves as an ideal wreck site for both snorkelers and novice divers. In just three years, it has attracted juvenile fish, arrow crabs, feather-duster worms, and a multitude of other underwater species. ■



Debbie II

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Locals L♥ve It!



Coastline cruising on De Palm Pleasure and Jolly Pirates

Sailing and snorkeling on one of Aruba's catamarans or sailboats is not just a tourist activity—it's a favorite of locals as well! Two local favorites are the De Palm Pleasure, a majestic, spacious 70-foot by 40-foot catamaran, and Jolly Pirates, an 85-foot teak schooner, famous for its lively crew and rope swing. Both vessels offer a variety of snorkel/sail excursions and sunset cruises.

Locals Love It!

The Blue Blocks Project

This grassroots project, spearheaded by locals Patrick Beke, Cado de Lannoy, and Ashlin Ahlip, is an initiative to protect the island's dunes and beaches.

Messages encouraging sustainability, like "Don't Drive on the Dunes," "Don't Drive on the Beach," and "Keep Our Beach Clean," are hand-painted on pieces of driftwood.



Fresh catch of the day at Hadicurari Restaurant

Located on Palm Beach, just across from the famed Hadicurari local fishing pier, Hadicurari Restaurant offers fresh catch-of-the-day specialties. By day, the restaurant is bustling with beach-goers enjoying grouper and spicy shrimp sandwiches, while at night, tiki torches light the beach in a romantic glow. Guests can opt for the ultimate nighttime barefoot beach dining experience, or choose a cozy indoor table for two.

Locals Love It!



FLY Fit Studio opens at Paseo Herencia

Want to keep up your fitness regime while visiting Aruba? One of the island's top fitness personalities, Jennifer Aldridge, recently opened her own fitness studio in the garage area on the third floor of Paseo Herencia Mall (an easy walk from the high-rise hotels). FLY Fit Studio offers a variety of instructor-led classes, including Spin, several styles of yoga, TRX, body pump, body sculpt, butt-leg-abs, and Pilates. Personal training is also available. Check out the Facebook page at FLY Fit Studio for class schedule and updates, or contact Jennifer directly at +297-731-7090.

Breakfast on the beach at Matthew's Beachside Restaurant

A local breakfast hangout, Matthew's is an ideal spot for breakfast on the beach any day of the week. Already a popular lunch and dinner spot, especially for guests on the island, it's the restaurant's breakfast—with all the classic egg dishes, waffles, and pancakes on the menu—that locals seem to crave. Oh, and mimosas are not just for Sundays here—enjoy them seven days a week!



Locals Love It!



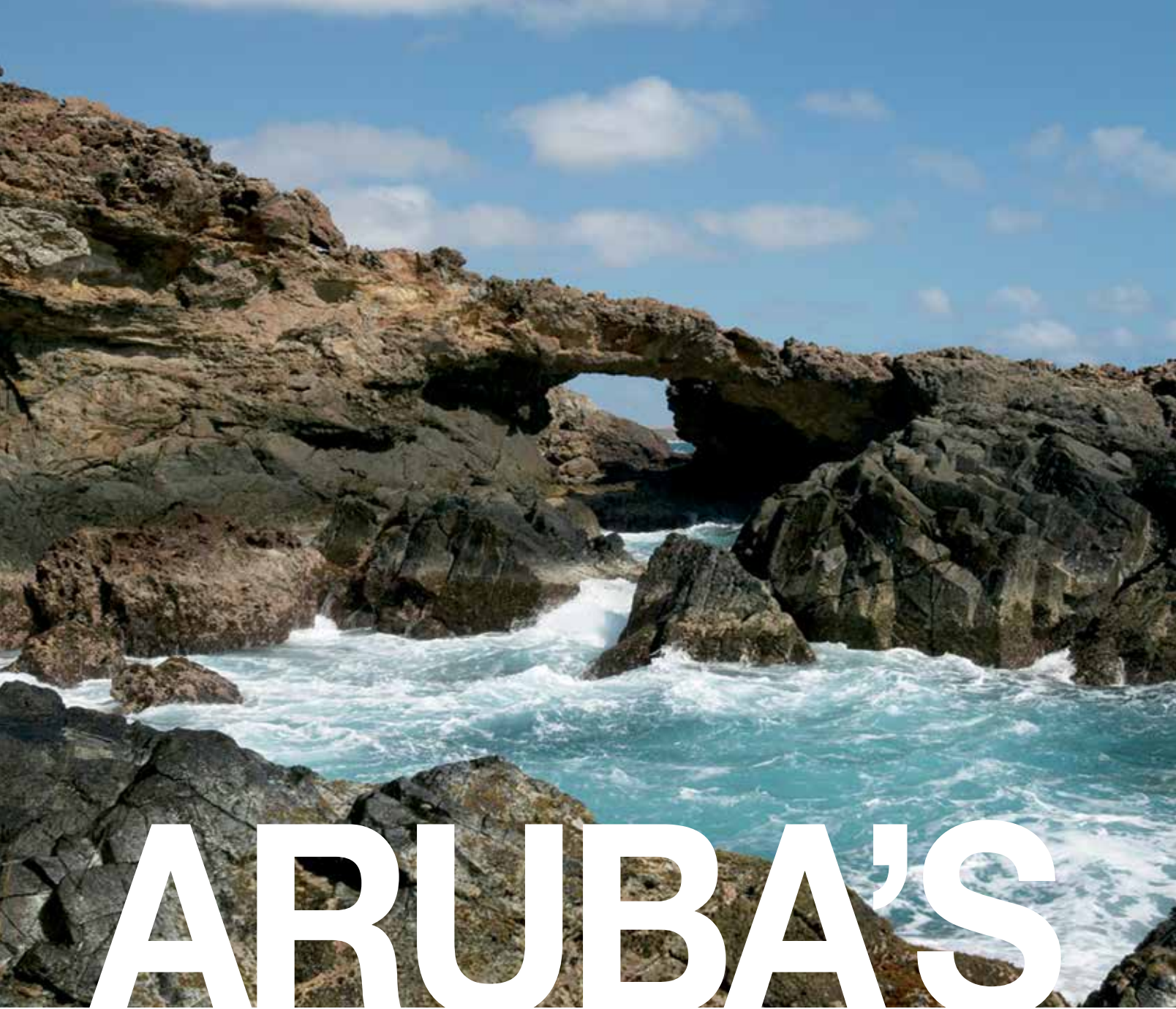
Premium steaks at Sunset Grille

Aruba's first American steakhouse debuted in 2000, introducing the island to 100% Certified Angus Beef. Although the menu has seen a few refreshes, offering the locals and guests on the island the best in premium steaks is always at the core of Sunset Grille's popularity. A new menu was launched in November 2016, and a favorite is the option to enhance your steak with a variety of rubs and sauces. The espresso coffee rub is amazing!

Pesavento collection at Gandelman

Talk about statement pieces! This jewelry line goes beyond just something to wear—breaking the mold, literally, of traditional jewelry styles. Each piece is a work of art with original, distinctive shapes and volume, utilizing precious materials including gold, silver, and gemstones. Sold exclusively at Gandelman.





ARUBA'S NATURAL WONDERS

ARUBA IS REVERED FOR ITS MILES OF GORGEOUS, POWDERY WHITE BEACHES AND AZURE COASTLINE, BUT THE DIVERSE TOPOGRAPHY OF THE ISLAND IS DRAMATICALLY BREATHTAKING AND SURPRISINGLY DIVERSE. WHETHER VENTURING OUT ON AN ISLAND TOUR BY RENTAL VEHICLE OR JOINING ONE OF THE ISLAND'S ORGANIZED TOURS, BE SURE TO KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR THESE STANDOUT NATURAL WONDERS.

Images provided by the Aruba Tourism Authority



NATURAL BRIDGES

Thousands of years of pounding waves and strong winds have slowly carved away at the limestone cliffs along Aruba's north coast to create eight natural bridges, the largest and most famous being the Natural Bridge, located at Andicuri Beach. Before collapsing in 2005, it was the most impressive structure of its kind in all the Caribbean. The Natural Bridge ruin is still a tourist attraction, with the still-intact Baby Bridge nearby also meriting a visit.



ROCK FORMATIONS

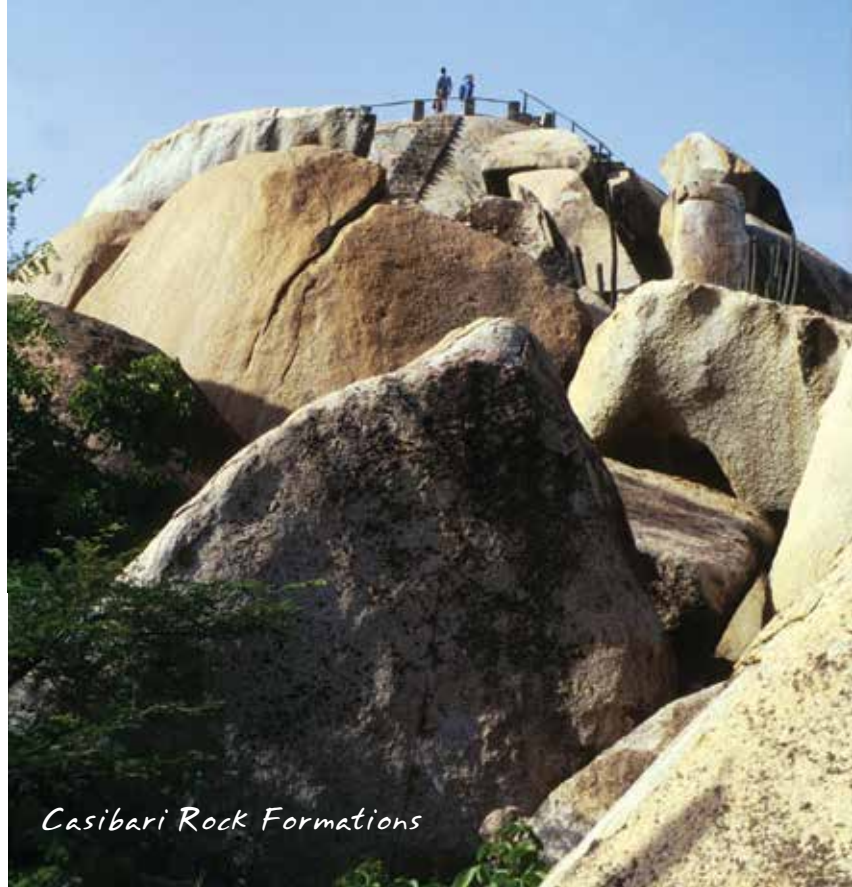
While the entire Island is peppered with huge diorite boulders, Casibari Boulders and Ayo Rock Formations boast the most remarkable collections. Arawak Indian rock drawings decorate the monolithic stones of Ayo, providing evidence of the great importance these rocks held for the island's early inhabitants.

CONCHI (NATURAL POOL)

Northwest of Dos Playa and nestled at the base of the northern shore cliffs within Arikok National Park, adventurers trek through the rocky ravines on horseback or hike rocky terrain to discover one of Aruba's hidden gems, the Natural Pool. Known in Papiamentu as Conchi, this shell-shaped pool is surrounded by a large barrier of lava rocks that greet crashing waves from the Caribbean Sea.

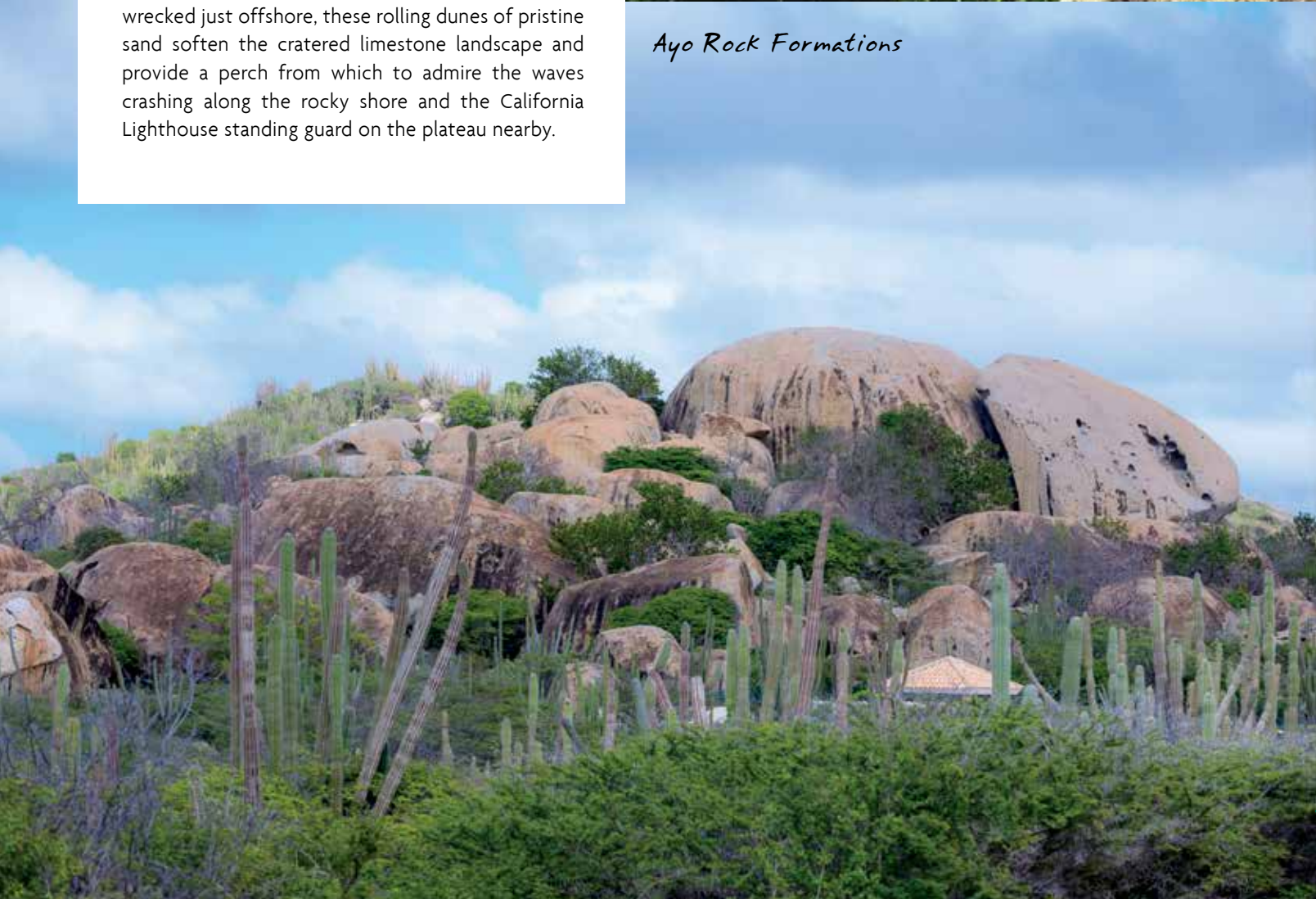
CALIFORNIA DUNES

The California Dunes are a protected nature reserve located at Hudishibana, an area at the northwestern tip of the Island. Named after the famous ship that wrecked just offshore, these rolling dunes of pristine sand soften the cratered limestone landscape and provide a perch from which to admire the waves crashing along the rocky shore and the California Lighthouse standing guard on the plateau nearby.



Casibari Rock Formations

Ayo Rock Formations





Conchi (Natural Pool)



California Dunes

Hooiberg

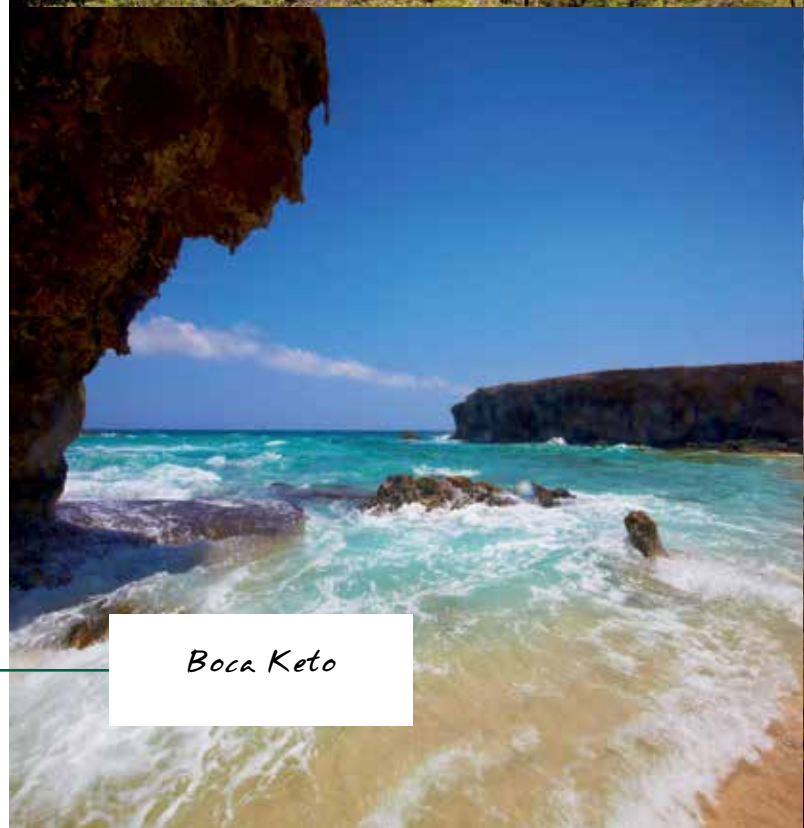


HOOIBERG

The Hooiberg, meaning “haystack” in Dutch, is the cone-shaped mountain that rises 540 feet up from the center of the island. Hikers can take the 550-plus steps to the top, where a panoramic view and encounters with wild goats, parakeets, and colorful lizards make the climb pleasantly worthwhile.

BOCA KETO

Located within Arikok National Park, just down the coast from the Natural Pool, this secluded beach is a true gem. Boca Keto is especially remarkable for the impressive limestone outcrop standing in the center of the cove, parting the waves as they rush in. Shaped like the island of Aruba, the huge rock has earned the name “Moro” or “Small Aruba” among locals. Boca Keto is accessible by horseback, mountain bike, or all-terrain vehicle.



Boca Keto



Guadirikiri

GUADIRIKIRI CAVE

The most visited among several small limestone caves along the northern shore within Arikok National Park, the Guadirikiri Cave is famous for the bursts of natural sunlight that seep through limestone holes throughout the cavern. Explorers can venture through various layers of the cave, which range from tall and wide to low and narrow. Adventurers who dare to look up may find friendly bats also touring the cave.

Fontein Cave

Famous for the decorative brownish-red Amerindian pictographs found on the cave's walls and ceiling, Fontein Cave is marked with a rich ancestral history that continues its storytelling among 1,000-year-old stalactites and stalagmites. Shallow in depth and low in height, the cave invites visitors to crawl through the space to uncover civilization and history at every turn. ■



Fontein Cave



SAN NICOLAS

BECOMES A

GALLERY OF

STREET ART



Art is a universal language. No matter your address, culture, religion, political views, or social or economic status, art communicates with us all. On the island of Aruba, we are blessed to have a rich and diverse population of more than 80 nationalities living here harmoniously, and the cultural payoff is immeasurable, particularly in the art community.



This past fall, the island's "Sunrise City" reaped the benefits of Aruba's growing art scene when 12 renowned street artists from all stretches of the globe—including Brazil, Portugal, Mexico, Kazakhstan, the Netherlands, Argentina, Curacao, and Germany—came to the island as part of the Aruba Art Fair, using the architecture of San Nicolas as their canvas.

While visiting Aruba, be sure to take a trip to San Nicolas (it's on the way to Baby Beach) and enjoy this breathtaking gallery of unique street art. ■





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Island Spa INDULGENCES

For many vacationers, being pampered in a spa is the ultimate way to unwind and let go of the daily stresses back home. Aruba offers the spa-goer a variety of day spas to choose from, each uniquely imbuing the spirit of the Island—from quaint outdoor beach cabanas to state-of-the-art treatment rooms.

Aruba's spas offer world-class spa amenities in an oasis of understated luxury, with therapists and technicians seasoned in the art of relaxation and rejuvenation.





THE RITZ-CARLTON SPA

ARUBA

The Spa at The Ritz-Carlton, Aruba is a 15,000-square-foot sanctuary that captures the lush, tropical environment and spiritual influences of Aruba in its 13 calming treatment rooms, salon, and retail boutique. The soft Caribbean hues and natural beige furnishings reflect the destination's ocean backdrop paired with its arid landscape. Refreshing aromas hand-selected for health, wealth, or happiness—and inspired by the Aruban tradition of wishing stones—fill the air, and the relaxing rhythm of waves enhances The Spa's tranquil island ambiance to help guests unwind and escape the everyday.

A variety of specialty local signature treatments, indigenous scrubs, and spiritual baths are offered. Inspired by the Island's ancient philosophies of health, beauty, and wellness, these treatments incorporate the healing properties of native plants, botanical blossoms, herbs, minerals, and fruits, including aloe, cactus, coconut, and oil sourced from divi-divi trees.

Location:

The Spa at The Ritz-Carlton, Aruba

Tel: + (297) 527-2222 ext. 2525. Call toll-free 1-800-241-3333

Website: www.ritzcarlton.com/aruba

Hours of Operation: Daily from 9am to 6pm





The Spa at Tierra del Sol Resort & Golf. Experience the island's premier, full-service day spa. Set in an oasis of tranquility, The Spa at Tierra del Sol invites you to luxuriate in an extraordinary menu of body and skincare treatments—from a variety of massage techniques and facials to manicures and pedicures. Our team of professionals are seasoned in pampering guests with personal service and attention to detail, allowing you to relax and indulge your body, mind, and soul. Couples can enjoy secluded privacy in our couples suite, and groups are easily accommodated as well.

After your treatments, you are invited to spend the day enjoying the Jacuzzi, sauna, steam room, and fitness facility, or lounging by the clubhouse pool with views of the lush golf course and coastline—all included with your spa services.

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Website: www.tierradelsol.com
Hours of Operation:
Monday-Friday 8am to 8pm
Saturday 8am to 6pm, Sunday 8am to 4pm





Zoia

SPA

Hyatt Regency Aruba's Zoia Spa—meaning “balance” or “poise” in Papiamentu, the island’s dialect—boasts eight treatment rooms, including two expansive spa suites, and an extensive spa menu featuring native ingredients.

The Aruba-inspired, all-natural treatments are based on four key Caribbean elements—sun, sand, sea, and love—and correspond to the colors of the Aruban flag—yellow, white, blue, and red. Treatments with the element of the sun, which signifies energy, are geared towards brightening and revitalizing the skin through the use of botanical blossoms. Treatments with the element of sand, which evokes purity, detoxify and rid the skin of impurities through the use of Aruba’s mineral-rich mud. Treatments featuring the element of the sea are designed to make guests feel complete relaxation, much like the serenity felt when listening to gently crashing waves. The final element, love, represents devotion and commitment; these treatments incorporate Aruba’s indigenous aloe plant and other botanicals, herbs, crystals, and oils to help guests achieve a sense of well-being through the use of traditional island methods.

Zoia Spa offers an idyllic location for serenity and tranquility, further enhancing its “authentic island chic” mentality.

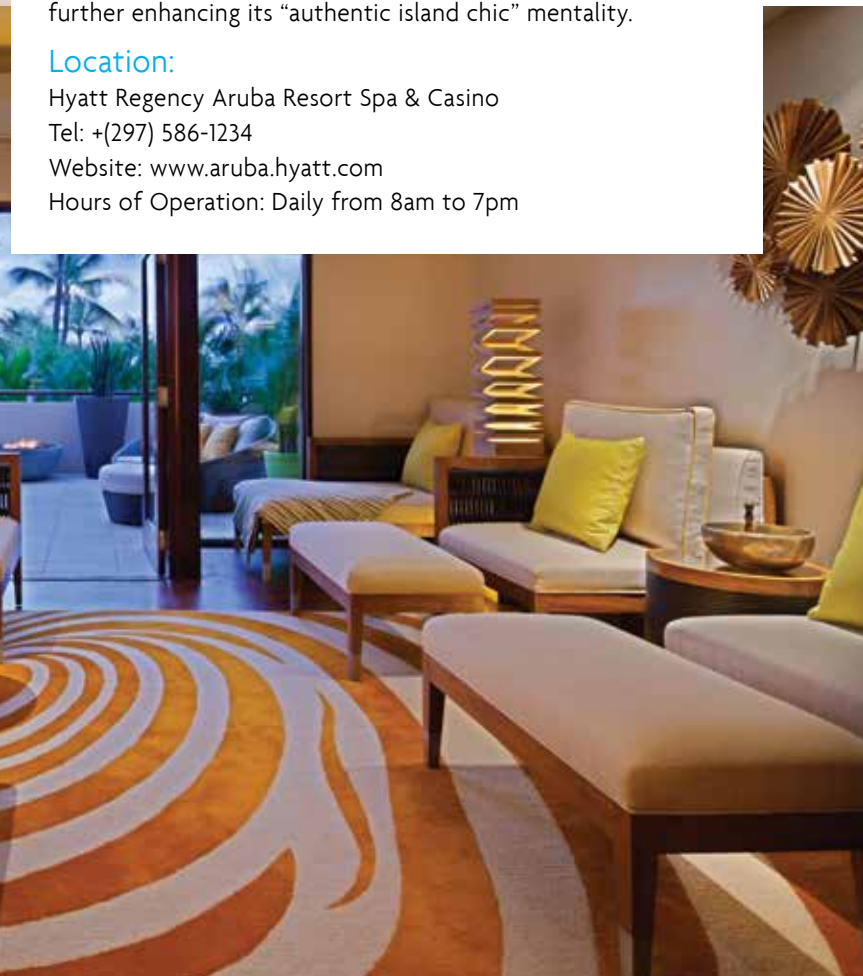
Location:

Hyatt Regency Aruba Resort Spa & Casino

Tel: +(297) 586-1234

Website: www.aruba.hyatt.com

Hours of Operation: Daily from 8am to 7pm





A tranquil oasis of bamboo and water features creates a soothing environment that boasts eight treatment rooms where guests can enjoy a full menu of services, including the signature Azeta di Coco Massage, which combines warm coconut oil with a massage utilizing slow, localized movements to both heal the skin and relax tense muscles. Additional treatments include advanced skincare therapies, therapeutic and integrated massages from around the world, exfoliating and detoxifying body treatments, and a full-service salon. All of the massage treatments, including couples massages, may be experienced in a beachside cabana, accompanied by the gentle sounds of nearby waves.

Location:

Hilton Aruba Caribbean Resort & Casino

Tel: +297 526 6052

Email: auahh_eforea_aruba@hilton.com

Website: arubacaribbean.hilton.com

Hours of Operation:

Spa: 10am to 6pm (Monday to Saturday) and 9am to 5pm (Sunday)

Fitness center: open 24 hours daily





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An authentic, indulgent spa experience can now be had at Pure Indulgence, located at the Divi Aruba Phoenix Beach Resort. The new spa offers the ideal balance between state-of-the-art facilities and organic, island-inspired treatments utilizing fresh fruits, vegetables, flowers, and herbs.

Thoughtful details include natural stone and marble finishes, wood tiles, handcrafted cedar wood elements, and hydrotherapy features throughout the décor. Luxurious treatment rooms, including two dedicated couples suites, and the spa's loft (dedicated to nail treatments) offer breathtaking views spanning from Eagle Beach to the California Lighthouse. The Pure Lovers Suite features a Microsilk Hydrotherapy Jacuzzi bath, premium Hansgrohe Raindance rain showers, and a couples steam room.

Pure Indulgence offers a complete menu of traditional and modern, on-trend treatments—from facials and other skincare treatments to massages, manicures, and pedicures. Tailored experiences like beach massages and bridal and group spa days are also offered.

Location:

Divi Aruba Phoenix Beach Resort. Tel: +(297) 586-6066 ext. 7069

Divi Village Golf & Beach Resort. Tel: +(297) 583 5000 ext. 888

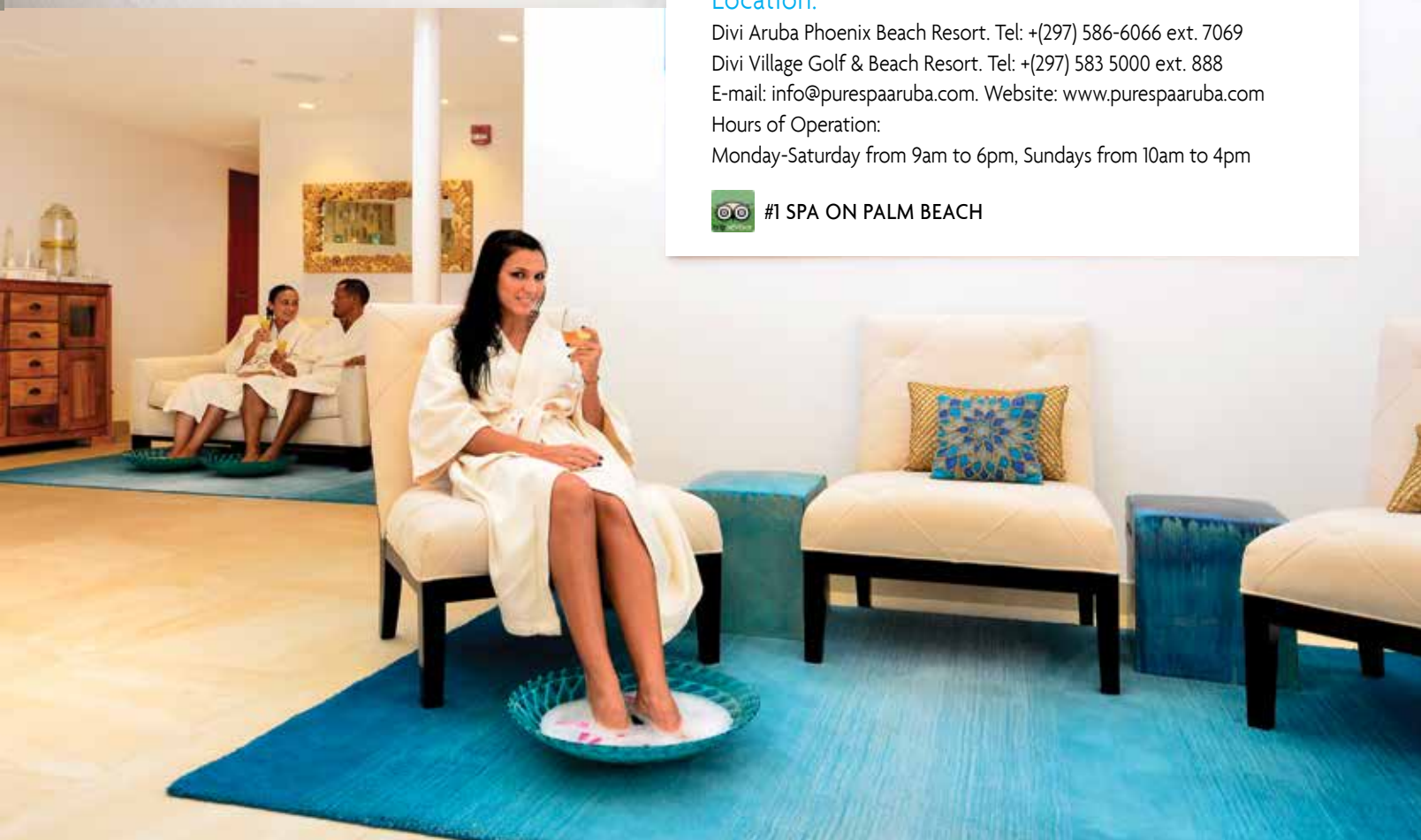
E-mail: info@purespaaruba.com. Website: www.purespaaruba.com

Hours of Operation:

Monday-Saturday from 9am to 6pm, Sundays from 10am to 4pm



#1 SPA ON PALM BEACH





Indulgence by the Sea celebrates 15 years, with a spa at Divi Aruba All-Inclusive Resort and a salon at Divi Tamarijn Aruba. The spa offers an extensive menu of massages, facials, body treatments, manicures, and pedicures. We pride ourselves on using organic body care lines, including Eminence Organic Skincare, Farm House Fresh, and Aromatherapy Associates. We also feature a Pure Aloe Menu highlighting Aruba Aloe products, crafted from locally grown and harvested aloe vera. Indulgence Salon at the Tamarijn Beach Resort has become known as the special occasion and bridal expert. Recently, we partnered with Cuozzo Studio for Hair, named as one of the top 100 salons in America by *Elle* magazine. Indulgence Salon offers Wella Professionals Color, Sebastian Professional, Olaplex, and Nioxin for hair care, as well as Opi for nail care. Relax, reflect, revitalize, and rejoice only at Indulgence by the Sea.

Locations:

Divi Aruba All-Inclusive Beach Resort (Spa)

Tel: +(297) 583-0083 / +(297) 525-5200 Ext. 5298

Tamarijn All-Inclusive Beach Resort (Hair & Nail Salon)

Tel: +(297) 582-0752 / +(297) 525-5200 Ext: 5291

E-mail: info@spaaruba.com

Website: <http://spaaruba.com>

Hours of Operation:

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the Salamandergroup *of boutiques*

Where shopping is fun and inspiring!

The Salamander Group is a collection of retail brands on the beautiful island of Aruba, each with its own distinct flavor yet all operating under the philosophy that shopping should be fun and inspiring. T.H. Palm & Company, The Lazy Lizard, The Juggling Fish, and The Juggling Fish Swimwear are fabulous boutiques offering a quality selection, impeccable décor, accommodating hours, and a unique shopping experience enhanced by an enthusiastic sales team. In Aruba, retail therapy at its finest is never very far away with The Salamander Group!



Celebrate the laid-back, island lifestyle at The Lazy Lizard, offering a quality range of Aruba-inspired tees and fashion apparel for the entire family, alongside a great selection of tropical resort wear for both men and women. The boutique also offers an exciting array of fun beach accessories, a collection of colorful Caribbean wall-art, beach-house décor, and a range of creative gifts.
LOCATIONS: South Beach Centre, Palm Beach, and Alhambra Mall, Eagle Beach



T.H. Palm & Company is perhaps one of the most enchanting and unforgettable boutiques in the Caribbean. The beautifully appointed emporium celebrates “Fun Island Living” with an impressive selection of upscale resort wear, casual island clothing, and shoes for men and women; exclusive fashion accessories; island-chic home accents; artistic tableware; and a wide assortment of novelty gifts. Each nook and cranny holds an unexpected treasure, promising you a completely original shopping experience.

LOCATION: Playa Linda Beach Resort, Palm Beach



The Juggling Fish is a beautiful “barefoot” boutique located on Palm Beach. A favorite among locals, the boutique also draws island guests year after year with its ever-changing selection of men’s and women’s resort wear, kid’s clothing, quality tees, on-trend beachwear and accessories, and beach-related gifts and home décor.

LOCATION: On the beach at Playa Linda Beach Resort, Palm Beach

Those who think the best shopping in Aruba should never be too far from the beach will love The Juggling Fish Swimwear boutique. This refreshingly appointed beachfront boutique offers essential beachwear and accessories for the entire family. The wide selection of women’s mix-and-match bikinis and tankinis assures the perfect fit for all body types. An assortment of stylish cover-ups, SPF wide-brimmed sun hats, beach bags, and flirty sandals will ensure that you are looking fun-in-the-sun fabulous!

LOCATION: On the beach at Playa Linda Beach Resort, Palm Beach



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What's New?!

Many of Aruba's guests return year after year. So what's new since you were last here? We saw many new arrivals in 2016, and included here are some of our favorites to add to your 2017 vacation itinerary.

Hyatt's Café Piccolo back by popular demand

Hyatt Regency Aruba reopened Café Piccolo. The restaurant first debuted 25 years ago at the resort's inception, and guests immediately fell in love with its selection of authentic Italian dishes, brick-oven pizza, and delectable desserts. Although Café Piccolo was later replaced by Mexicado, the restaurant has been revived by popular demand and will reclaim its place as being one of the premier Italian kitchens on island.

Menu items by Chef Pellegrini include Saltimbocca Alla Romana, mouthwatering tenderloin wrapped in Parma ham served with creamy polenta and sautéed wild mushrooms; Salmone Alla Salsa Fiorentina, seared salmon served with asparagus, artichoke, and a fresh spinach sauce; and Prosciutto e Arugula Pizzetta, cooked in a brick oven. Many of the signature dishes are drizzled with an infused olive oil, an offering characteristic of Café Piccolo. The curated wine list includes a selection of aged wines, which are served tableside from a mini wine barrel.

"After many guests requested that we recreate their favorite dishes, we decided to reintroduce Café Piccolo to our roster of amazing restaurants," said Chef Pellegrini. "We are excited to take new and repeat guests back on our culinary tour of Italy."

Café Piccolo provides indoor and outdoor seating for 80 guests in a truly romantic setting. Dine inside to see the chefs prepare pizza with views of the restaurant's famous brick oven or enjoy the cozy ambiance outside by the water fountain.



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What's New?!

De Palm Tours renovates iconic shop at the Natural Bridge

One of Aruba's most iconic landmarks is the Natural Bridge, a popular stop on many island tours. In 1970, the Luydens family opened the Thirst Aid Station adjacent to the Natural Bridge, providing parched visitors with refreshments and souvenirs. After two of the original owners passed away, the family turned the keys over to the island's largest tour operator, De Palm Tours.

In an effort to preserve the family legacy and provide visitors with an authentic sense of place, De Palm renovated the space with extra care and detail to give the building a traditional "cunucu" house façade. Inside, visitors will find a variety of refreshments, as well as popular gift items and apparel. Visitors wanting to visit the Natural Bridge can venture there on their own or book one of the many tours offered by De Palm Tours.



Aruba's #1 party bus company welcomes two new buses to the fleet

For the liveliest nightlife tour on the island, an evening on the Kukoo Kunuku is a must. The spirit and energy of the island comes to life on these brilliantly painted buses—where the crew is just as colorful! The party buses can be found cruising the city streets and country roads, touring island hot spots and local hangouts.

The first bus, a 1957 Chevy school bus (hitting the road back in 1996), has since been retired, but a fleet of six buses has picked up where the old gal left off, with two of those buses added recently. Both of these newbies grandly showcase the creatively quirky artwork so iconic to the Kukoo Kunuku. The fleet's new mascot, Pork Chop the Pig, proudly oversees the action on one of the new buses.



Divi Aruba All-Inclusive opens new wing

Divi Aruba All-Inclusive opened a new pool-view building. Divi Aruba's first pool-view category building offers 60 luxury rooms and two swimming pools. Each guest room has a patio or balcony facing the pools, as well as amenities that include a built-in fridge, a floating desk with pop-up electrical outlets and five USB ports, and a bathroom with a walk-in shower and a granite counter with double sinks.

The entire structure was constructed as a "green" building in accordance with sustainable practices. It is well-insulated and equipped with solar heaters, sun-reflecting sliding doors, and LED lighting to keep electricity consumption low. Also new is a more contemporary porte cochere with a reflective fountain pool at the entrance and pillars accented with blue LED light strips.



Pure Lime spices up Divi restaurant offerings



Located at the Divi Aruba All-Inclusive, Pure Lime marks the tenth dining option for guests staying at the Divi properties. One of the first full-service Mexican restaurants on Aruba, the kitchen is led by Executive Chef Lyssette Van Der Biezen, who was born and raised in Mexico, grew up with its traditional cuisine, and later studied international gastronomy.

The restaurant has an open-kitchen concept, and the menu offers a variety of savory dishes that include traditional Mexican flavors and spices such as cilantro, avocado, and lime. The cocktail list features signature drinks such as margaritas and sangria made with pears, grapes, and apples. The restaurant's vibrant décor is inspired by modern Mexican art, featuring bright colors accented with lime green. Guests can enjoy dining in chalkboard-painted booths or at high tables.

What's New?!

The Chophouse at Manchebo debuts



Making its debut on the island, The Chophouse, located at Manchebo Beach Resort & Spa, builds on the island-wide reputation of its predecessor, the French Steakhouse, serving exquisitely crafted cuisine in a more modern, exclusively indoor space. The Chophouse offers the finest cuts of beef, freshly caught Caribbean fish, local delicacies, and international favorites, with menu highlights including Grilled Lamb Chops, Pan-Seared Filet Mignon, Sesame-Crusted Ahi-Tuna, and Shrimp and Scallops finished with Coconut Curry.

Sleek and modern, The Chophouse exudes island sophistication, with warm wood paneling and clean simple lines creating a stylish backdrop for the resort's beloved pianist, Eddie, who has delighted Manchebo guests for more than 25 years.



Beach Brides—Aruba's online resource for destination brides

The Aruba Tourism Authority launched a blog showcasing Aruba's destination-wedding scene. The Beach Brides blog is a dynamic tool to reach couples during the planning stages, providing both inspiration and practical, relevant content to help them plan their perfect nuptial experience on Aruba.

The blog is an online resource to assist couples that have chosen Aruba with ideas and details to help tailor their weddings with unique aspects of the island—from incorporating local traditions to choosing that special venue. Local vendors, including wedding planners, florists, photographers, caterers, and hair/makeup professionals, are also featured on Beach Brides.

Beach Brides is updated weekly with featured weddings, advice from our local professionals for the big day, personal stories of other couples' wedding journeys on Aruba, and the latest bridal trends for island destination weddings. For more information or to inquire about being a part of the Beach Brides blog, contact the Aruba Tourism Authority.



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What's New?!

Gold Coast Residence inaugurates new clubhouse

Last summer, the Gold Coast clubhouse was inaugurated at Gold Coast Residence. Developer Fito Croes and family members welcomed neighbors, Gold Coast residents, dignitaries, and friends to the beautiful just-finished clubhouse with views of the salina and the high-rise hotels on the horizon. The interiors of the clubhouse and restaurant were completed by the talented in-house design and creative team, headed by Marisol Croes-Marchena. The clubhouse features a porte cochere with a bronze art piece by Gilbert Senchi. The main open-air lobby is beautifully tiled, with comfortable seating areas in front of the check-in desk. Outside on the terrace overlooking the free-form zero-entry pool, the bar commands the right-hand side, while the rest of the gorgeous open space is home to White Modern Cuisine, which includes a partially enclosed dining room with modular glass doors.



Sunset Grille shakes it up with new cocktail bar

The Sunset Grille recently received an added feature—a cocktail bar. The beautifully appointed and fully stocked bar offers classic and modern cocktails that can be enjoyed before, during, or after dinner. Guests may ask the mix master for the wine and beer list, but most opt for the “Better Bar Experience,” where bartenders share their knowledge of cocktails and spirits while expertly creating craft cocktails from fresh juices, homemade syrups, fruits, herbs, and unique garnishes.

Among the novel specialty cocktails are the Ravenous Pineapple, with silver tequila, fresh pineapple, and mint leaves, splashed with prosecco, and the Watermelon Margarita, with silver tequila, agave syrup, fresh watermelon cubes, and lime juice. The martini bar list includes the Dark Chocolate Martini, as well as the iconic Classic Cosmopolitan and the Lemon Drop Martini.



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What's New?!

An authentic taste of Peru at Asi Es Mi Peru


Asi Es Mi Peru, opened in late 2016 at Paradise Beach Villas by Peruvian-born Roxanne Salinas, features a genuine Peruvian cevicheria where you can sit at the bar and watch the chef make your ceviche from scratch and to order. Ceviche—fresh fish marinated in lime juice—is the Peruvian national dish, and it's prepared with an assortment of just-caught seafood, tomatoes, tostada chips, crisp onion, salt, and hot pepper, the world-famous aji amarillo. The tart and salty ceviche is accompanied by sides of boiled corn, creamy sweet potatoes, and/or crunchy toasted corn, creating a symphony of tastes. The cevicheria also serves tiradito—a variation of ceviche and reminiscent of Japanese sushi—deliciously marinated with a smoky aji amarillo.

The restaurant gazebo features a genuine, colorful Peruvian marketplace where you can buy typical Peruvian crafts, with a portion of the proceeds donated to Aruba's cancer foundation. Inside, the restaurant is a more formal dining room featuring the food that made Peru famous: Lomo Saltado (a stewed beef), Aji de Gallina (a creamy chicken dish), and a number of typical preparations for potatoes, with Papas a la Huancaína and Causa topping the list.

On the second floor, a private dining room for special functions flaunts just one long community table with 14 seats, great for birthday parties or family gatherings.




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